

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9990

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 06765

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EEWT, UR, US
SUBJECT: BUSINESS FACILITATION MEETINGS

REF: STATE 79888

1. EMBASSY NOTES WITH INTEREST AND SATISFACTION
CONTENTS OF SOVIET CHARGE VASEV'S NON-PAPER HANDED
TO AMBASSADOR SHULMAN ON MARCH 27 ON SUBJECT OF BUSINESS
FACILITATION MEETINGS. WE NOTE (AS WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY)
THAT GIVEN COMPARATIVELY MUCH LARGER NUMBER OF ALL-
UNION MINISTRIES IN SOVIET UNION THAN FEDERAL DEPART-
MENTS IN UNITED STATES, AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY IN OUR
GOVERNMENT IS A MUCH RARER BIRD THAN A DEPUTY MINISTER
IN THE USSR. (BY OUR COUNT, THERE ARE THIRTEEN SOVIET
DEPUTY MINISTERS OF FOREIGN TRADE -- COUNTING TWO FIRST
DEPUTY MINISTERS -- AS AGAINST PERHAPS LESS THAN HALF
THAT NUMBER OF ASSISTANT SECRETARIES IN USG DIRECTLY
INVOLVED WITH FOREIGN TRADE BETWEEN ALL COUNTRIES AND
OURSELVES -- NOT ONLY WITH NON-MARKET ECONOMIES. AND
THERE ARE 62 ALL-UNION AND UNION REPUBLIC MINISTRIES
IN THE SOVIET UNION, EACH WITH A RAFT OF DEPUTY
MINISTERS.) THUS, LEVEL OF MEETINGS PROPOSED IN VASEV
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NON-PAPER, WHILE PERHAPS COSMETICALLY EQUIVALENT, IS
IN FACT NOT IN BALANCE. ALTHOUGH SOVIET MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN TRADE CAN BE EXPECTED TO ARGUE STRENUOUSLY THAT
EMBASSY MEETINGS IN MOSCOW WITH DEPUTY MINISTER MANZHULO
MUST BE RECIPROCATED BY SOVIET EMBASSY MEETINGS IN
WASHINGTON WITH AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY, WE SEE NO VALUE
WHATSOEVER IN CONCEDING THIS POINT TO THEM WITHOUT

FIRM DEBATE.

2. ALSO, WE NOTE THAT VASEV NON-PAPER DOES NOT SPEAK TO QUESTION OF ALTERNATING MEETINGS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON. AS WE RECOMMENDED EARLIER, THIS FEATURE IS ESSENTIAL TO A BALANCED, FRUITFUL DIALOGUE. WITHOUT ITS INCLUSION, WE FEAR THAT MFT WOULD INEVITABLY REVERT TO FORM AND BEGIN TO DRAG ITS HEELS ON ARRANGING MEETINGS IN MOSCOW IN WAKE OF EACH WASHINGTON GATHERING. IF WE ARE TO EXTRACT MAXIMUM BENEFITS FROM THIS POTENTIALLY USEFUL VEHICLE, IT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO PRESENT OUR AGENDA OF LOCAL COMMERCIAL AND BUSINESS FACILITATION NEEDS SEQUENTIALLY WITH SOVIET PRESENTATIONS IN WASHINGTON SO THAT MUTUAL CONCESSIONS, IF ANY, CAN BE MATCHED AND -- INSOFAR AS POSSIBLE -- RECIPROCAL.

3. ONE OF BASIC PROBLEMS WE HAVE IN MOSCOW IS THAT SOVIET MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE IS FRAGMENTED INTERNALLY SO THAT AN APPROACH BY ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR, FOR EXAMPLE, TO ZINOVYEV AS HEAD OF MFT'S CAPITALIST COUNTRIES' DIVISION TO DISCUSS A BROAD RANGE OF PROBLEMS AFFECTING U.S. BUSINESSMEN IN MOSCOW -- BOTH RESIDENTS AND VISITORS -- WOULD IN VIRTUALLY EVERY CASE SPILL OVER INTO AREAS, SUCH AS PROTOCOL, OVER WHICH HE HAS NO CONTROL. FOR THESE, CONFIDENTIAL

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WE WOULD NEED TO ARRANGE SEPARATE CALL ON MFT PROTOCOL CHIEF, RAKHMANIN, AND SO ON. ONLY A MEETING WITH A DEPUTY MINISTER, MOREOVER, IN WHICH REPRESENTATIVES FROM PROTOCOL DIVISION, CAPITALIST COUNTRIES' DIVISION, AND OTHERS, WOULD BE INCLUDED COULD BRING VARIOUS ACTORS TOGETHER IN PRESENCE OF COMMON SUPERIOR AND POSSIBLY LEAD TO RESOLUTION OF SOME OF OUR PROBLEMS.

4. TO ASSIST WASHINGTON AGENCIES IN THEIR REVIEW OF VASEV NON-PAPER, IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO SUMMARIZE FROM EMBASSY'S POINT OF VIEW JUST EXACTLY WHAT IT IS WE WOULD HOPE TO ACHIEVE BY HOLDING THESE BUSINESS FACILITATION MEETINGS. IN ROUGH ORDER OF PRIORITY, WE SEE FOLLOWING ITEMS AS OUR GOAL:

(A) TO ESTABLISH AN OFFICIAL SOUNDING BOARD IN BOTH COUNTRIES AT A LEVEL HIGH ENOUGH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND WITH A MEETING SCHEDULE FREQUENT ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN A MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE ON MATTERS OF AN OPERATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHARACTER.

(B) TO SECURE FAVORABLE WORKING AND LIVING CONDITIONS FOR U.S. BUSINESSMEN IN MOSCOW AND OTHER PARTS OF USSR.

(C) TO MAINTAIN, IN LINE WITH ABOVE, PRINCIPLE OF
RECIPROCITY BETWEEN TREATMENT OF U.S. BUSINESSMEN
IN SOVIET UNION AND SOVIET COMMERCIAL REPRESENTATIVES
IN UNITED STATES.

(D) TO ENGAGE THIS EMBASSY FIRMLY IN THE EYES OF
THE SOVIETS AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE POLICY-
MAKING PROCESS ON TRADE AND COMMERCIAL MATTERS.

(E) LAST BUT NOT LEAST (AND CONNECTED WITH POINT
ABOVE) TO ENHANCE EMBASSY CONTACTS IN UPPER ECHELONS
OF SOVIET MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND BRING THEM UP

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 06765

TO SOME WEAK SEMBLANCE OF PARITY WITH COMPARATIVELY
FREE AND OPEN ACCESS SOVIET DIPLOMATS IN WASHINGTON
ENJOY TO HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS THROUGHOUT USG.
5. WE, OF COURSE, DO NOT AND WOULD NOT HESITATE TO
MEET WITH OFFICIALS AT ANY LEVEL IN MFT SO LONG AS
IT SERVES OR WOULD SERVE OUR OR U.S. BUSINESS PURPOSES.
OUR CONTINUING DESIRE TO RESOLVE WHAT APPEARS TO HAVE
BECOME AN EXTREMELY CONVOLUTED QUESTION DERIVES FROM
OUR CONCERN THAT UNLESS WE HOLD SOVIET FEET TO FIRE
ON THIS ISSUE THEY WILL BE TEMPTED TO TAKE LESS
SERIOUSLY OUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS ON COMMERCIAL
MATTERS. TOON

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